

CLAIMS:

1. A blister pack comprising a first blister tray formed with a plurality of trough formations in parallel, side-by-side relationship, each trough formation being shaped to accommodate an array of two to ten smoking articles, with adjacent trough formations being spaced apart from one another by planar lands to which a peelable or rupturable backing film is laminated so as to define a plurality of individually sealed compartments, with each array of smoking articles being individually accessible by rupturing or peeling away that portion of the backing film covering the array.

5 2. A blister pack according to claim 1 wherein trough-receiving recesses are defined between adjacent trough formations, the trough-receiving recesses being sized to receive adjacent or overlying trough formations in a complementary fit.

10 3. A blister pack according to either one of the preceding claims in which lines of weakness extend through adjacent planar lands and/or the backing film for allowing the selective severing or opening of individual sealed components.

15 4. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims in which the backing film is provided with film access means.

5 5. A blister pack according to claim 4 in which the film access means comprises a non-attached corner tag for allowing the film to be manually gripped prior to peeling.

20 6. A blister pack according to claim 4 in which the film access means comprises a blister tray having a peeling recess spaced away from the planar level and defining an airgap for allowing the film to be manually gripped prior to peeling.

25 7. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the backing film is laminated to the tray by means of a resealable adhesive adapted to allow repeated access to be obtained to the smoking articles within the trough formation by peeling the backing film away from the tray, and resealing the backing film to the tray to provide a resealed compartment for the remaining smoking article.

30 8. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims which each of the elongate trough formations terminate in a minor planar end walls which are spaced apart from one another by a distance corresponding to the lengths of the smoking articles,

so that the inner surfaces of the end walls serve to retain tobacco particles within the smoking articles.

9. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims wherein a first blister tray includes a first trough-receiving recess adjacent the first trough, a second blister tray hinged to the first blister tray along a fold line and defining a second trough directly opposite the first recess and a second trough-receiving recess directly opposite the first trough.

10. A blister pack according to claim 9 which is foldable between an open position and a closed position in which the first trough locates complementally within the second recess and the second trough locates complementally within the first recess.

11. A blister pack according to claim 10 in which the first blister tray defines a row of first troughs alternating with a row of first recesses, and the second blister tray defines a row of second troughs alternating with a row of second recesses, the rows of first and second troughs being arranged to interdigitate with one another when folded together.

12. A blister pack according to any one of claims 9 to 11 which includes at least one pair of parallel fold lines, with the fold lines being spaced apart from one another by a distance corresponding to the depths of the compartments, such that the planar substrates are in opposed parallel relationship when the blister trays are folded together.

13. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims wherein each of the trough formations are shaped so as to have a fluted configuration such that the inner surface of each trough defines a plurality of parallel elongate concave recesses adapted to receive and support said array of smoking articles in the trough formations in a closely stacked configuration.

14. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the radius of curvature of each elongate concave recess is half the diameter of the smoking articles to be located in the trough formation.

15. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims wherein each trough formation is of generally triangular, truncated triangular, trapezoidal or rectangular

configuration so as to accommodate said array of smoking articles in a space efficient stacked configuration.

16. A blister pack according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein at least one trough formation is shaped to accommodate at least three smoking articles in a multi-layer array, with the number of articles in each stacked layer progressively increasing by one from an innermost layer at the base of the trough formation.

17. A blister pack comprising a blister tray formed with a trough formation shaped to accommodate an array of at least three smoking articles, with said trough formation being surrounded by a planar land to which a peelable or rupturable backing film is laminated so as to define an individually sealed compartment with said array of smoking articles being individually accessible by rupturing or peeling away that portion of the backing film covering the array, the array of smoking articles being arranged in at least two layers, with the number of smoking articles in each layer progressively decreasing by one, with the walls of the trough being fluted to accommodate the smoking articles in a snug complementary fit.

18. A blister pack according to claim 17 wherein three cigarettes are accommodated in the trough in a 2:1 stacked configuration.

19. A package comprising a tray formed with a plurality of sub-trays, each sub-tray having a trough formation shaped to accommodate at least one smoking article, with adjacent trough formations being surrounded and spaced apart from one another by planar lands to which a peelable or rupturable backing film is laminated so as to define a plurality of individually sealed compartments, with a fold line being defined in the land between each trough formation for allowing the sub-trays to be inwardly folded into a mutually nested position to define a cylindrical package, with the outer walls of the package being constituted by the backing film.

20. A package according to claim 19 which is four-sided so as to define a rectangular cylindrical package.

21. A package according to claim 19 which is three-or six-sided.

22. A package according to any one of claims 19 to 21 wherein the outermost sub-trays are provided with a retaining arrangement for allowing them to be joined

together, the retaining arrangement preferably being in the form of an adhesive marginal flap.

23. A package according to any one of claims 19 to 22 which is at least partially covered by an outer wrapping or sleeve.

5 24. A package according to any one of the preceding claims 19 to 23 wherein adjacent trough formations are shaped to accommodate different numbers of smoking articles.

10 25. A package according to claim 20 in which first and third trough formations are shaped to accommodate two articles in a side-by-side configuration, and second and fourth trough formations are shaped to accommodate three articles in a triangular stacked configuration.

15 26. A package according to claim 25 wherein mutual nesting is provided by convex radiused portions of the first and third trough formations nesting within concave radiused portions of the second and fourth trough formations, the nesting recesses being defined between the double and single layers of rod-like articles.

27. A package according to claim 20 in which first and third trough formations may be shaped to accommodate five articles in a 3:2 stacked configuration, and second and fourth trough formations may be shaped to accommodate six articles in a 3:2:1 stacked configuration.

20 28. A package according to claim 21 in which the six-sided package is provided with six depending trough formations, with each of the six trough formations being shaped to accommodate three articles in a stacked configuration.

25 29. A smoking article package comprising a self supporting tray formed of a thermo-plastic material defining an elongate trough formation containing an array of between two and ten smoking articles, said trough formation being contiguous with and surrounded by a planar land, and a peelable or rupturable backing film laminated to said planar land so as to encapsulate said array of smoking articles in said trough formation, said array of smoking articles being accessible by rupturing or peeling away the backing film from the tray.

30. A smoking article package according to claim 29 wherein the smoking articles are in a nested configuration within each trough formation, and, in the case of a multi-layer array, the articles progressively decrease by one from an innermost base layer at the base of the trough upwards.

5 31. A smoking article package according to any one of the preceding claims 19 to 28 which includes a global price code for the entire package which is accessible by a reader when the package is intact, and a series of subsidiary price codes on each of the side trays which is only accessible by a reader when the package is opened.

10 32. A smoking article package according to claim 31 wherein the global price code is rendered unusable on opening of the package.